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TENNESSEE CROPS SURVIVE ADVERSE WEATHER

Tennessee crops appeared to have survived Tropical Storm Isidore and Lili's heavy rainfall and winds without any significant damage, although a few West Tennessee counties did experience flooding along rivers and creeks. In fact, the above normal rainfall actually replenished drought-stressed pastures, helped fill stock ponds, and provided moisture for late planted soybeans. Harvest of this year's row crops, however, have been slowed due to wet conditions. State Statistician Debra Kenerson expressed, "Tennessee farmers are relieved to have been spared from substantial harm to crops and livestock and are anxious to get back in their fields and proceed with harvest." According to a October 1 Yield Survey conducted by the Tennessee Agricultural Statistics Service, production totals for all crops are well below last year's levels but still better than the past 5-year average. The October survey collects farmers' expectations of final yields assuming normal weather conditions through harvest and showed the following results: **Cotton**, 660 pounds of lint per acre, down 103 pounds from 2001; **Corn**, 107 bushels per acre, down 25 bushels from the previous year; **Soybeans**, 31 bushels per acre, 3 bushels less than a year ago; **Other Hay**, excluding alfalfa, 2.1 tons per acre, down 0.1 tons from last year; and **Burley Tobacco**, 1,800 pounds per acre, 200 pounds below last year and the lowest since 1998. Yield per acre for the other tobacco types are forecast at: **Type 22**, 2,900 pounds; **Type 23**, 3,100 pounds; and **Type 35**, 2,500 pounds, all down from 2001.

WEATHER PERMITTING, STATE'S COTTON CROP READY FOR HARVEST

Cotton production is forecast at 770,000 bales, unchanged from the previous forecast, but 21 percent below the 2001 record production. Yield is forecast at 660 pounds, the same as last month, but 103 pounds below last year's record. Producers were faced with many challenges during the month. The recent wet weather caused delays in harvest and defoliation activities, and has many growers concerned about quality. As of the first week in October, virtually all of the crop was open and defoliation was nearly three-fourths complete. Harvest was lagging behind the normal pace by 7 to 10 days.

CORN PRODUCTION DOWN 19 PERCENT FROM 2001

Tennessee's corn production is forecast at 66.3 million bushels, down 19 percent from 2001. Corn yields are expected to average 107 bushels per acre, down 25 bushels from last year's record high, but up a bushel from the September forecast. Although planting of this year's corn crop got underway on time, development was slowed due to unseasonable cool, wet weather this spring. The crop has suffered difficulties with insects, unfavorable weather conditions, and flooding along the Mississippi River. Throughout the month of September, corn crop development outpaced last year and the 5-year average. By month's end, Tropical Storm Isidore passed through the State, slowing harvest. As of the week ending September 29, 11 percent of the 620,000 acres for grain harvest remained unharvested. Harvest progress continues ahead of the normal pace.

SOYBEAN YIELDS IMPROVE SLIGHTLY

The State's soybean yield is forecast at 31 bushels per acre, up a bushel from the September forecast but 3 bushels below last year. Soybean production from the projected 1.12 million acres for grain is expected to total 34.7 million bushels, down 2 percent from 2001. Late August and mid-September rainfall particularly helped improve the condition of the double-cropped beans. By the first of October, soybean development was slightly ahead of the normal pace with three-fourths of the acreage dropping leaves. Over 50 percent of the crop is rated in good to excellent condition with harvest progressing in line with normal.

(OVER)

BURLEY PRODUCTION THE LOWEST IN 61 YEARS

Tennessee’s burley tobacco growers expect to produce 54.0 million pounds, down 10.0 million pounds from last year and if realized, the lowest production since 1941. Average yield is forecast at 1,800 pounds per acre from 30,000 acres. As harvest of this year’s burley crop nears completion, prospects for a better than average crop remain dim for most East Tennessee and a few Middle Tennessee growers. The burley crop has suffered a season of prolonged drought stress in many locations. Therefore, the rain received in August and September arrived too late to add any significant weight to the crop. Burley stripping is underway with good conditions for curing. The majority of the dark types have been harvested, with most of it now in the barns. Yields per acre are forecast at 2,900 pounds for Type 22; 3,100 pounds for Type 23; and 2,500 pounds for Type 35, all unchanged from the August forecast, but down from last year.

HAY PRODUCTION BELOW LAST YEAR’S RECORD

Hay production, excluding alfalfa, is forecast at 4.31 million tons, 7 percent below last year’s record production. Yields are expected to average 2.10 tons per acre, down 0.1 tons from a year ago. Hay harvest got underway on schedule in a few areas of the state by the end of April, but quickly fell behind normal due to wet conditions in early May. Tennessee producers had good yields on their first cuttings, although some quality suffered because the crop was too ripe. During August, pastures were rated in fair to good condition with many suffering from the lack of moisture. The second cutting of alfalfa was virtually complete. By the end of September, Tropical Storm Isidore had brought relief to drought-stressed pastures and hay fields. Throughout the month, available hay supplies were becoming a concern due to widespread supplemental feeding. Some growers opted to move the calves to the market early in order to combat the shortage. With the recent rainfall, pastures conditions have improved and cattle were rated in fair-to-good condition.

CROP FORECASTS: TENNESSEE AND UNITED STATES, OCTOBER 1, 2002, WITH COMPARISONS

Crop	Unit	Harvested Acres		Yield Per Acre		Production	
			Indicated		Indicated		Indicated
		2001	2002	2001	2002	2001	2002
		Thousands		Number of Units		Thousands	
TENNESSEE							
Apples	lb.	---	---	---	---	9,000	8,000
Corn for grain	bu.	620	620	132	107	81,840	66,340
Cotton ¹	lb.	615	560	763	660	978	770
Hay, All (excluding Alfalfa)	ton	2,100	2,050	2.20	2.10	4,620	4,305
Peaches	lb.	---	---	---	---	3,700	4,000
Soybeans	bu.	1,040	1,120	34.0	31.0	35,360	34,720
Tobacco, All	lb.	39.69	35.90	2,189	1,977	86,893	70,990
E. Dark-fired (22)	lb.	6.5	5.0	3,000	2,900	19,500	14,500
W. Dark-fired (23)	lb.	.52	.40	3,175	3,100	1,651	1,240
Burley (31)	lb.	32.0	30.0	2,000	1,800	64,000	54,000
One-sucker (35)	lb.	.67	.50	2,600	2,500	1,742	1,250
Winter Wheat	bu.	340	300	54.0	46.0	18,360	13,800
UNITED STATES							
Apples	lb.	—	---	---	---	9,629,100	8,910,600
Corn for grain	bu.	68,808	70,541	138.2	127.2	9,506,840	8,969,836
Cotton ¹	lb.	13,827.7	12,861.4	705	674	20,302.8	18,070.0
Hay, All (excluding Alfalfa)	ton	39,699	40,575	1.93	1.87	76,437	75,792
Peaches	lb.	---	---	---	---	2,441,400	2,531,700
Soybeans	bu.	72,975	71,799	39.6	37.0	2,890,682	2,653,798
Tobacco, All	lb.	432.40	434.30	2,293	2,040	991,519	886,020
E. Dark-fired (22)	lb.	9.80	7.50	3,135	2,900	30,720	21,750
W. Dark-fired (23)	lb.	3.62	2.80	3,419	3,271	12,377	9,160
Burley (31)	lb.	164.30	161.50	2,033	1,880	334,066	303,066
One-sucker (35)	lb.	3.42	2.70	2,821	2,744	9,648	7,410
Winter Wheat	bu.	31,295	29,651	43.5	38.5	1,361,479	1,142,802

¹ Production in 480-lb. net weight bales. U.S. production includes American-Pima cotton.

REMINDER: All forecasts in this report are based on conditions about October 1 and do not reflect any possible weather affects since that time.
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